

Suggested COVID- 19 Health & Safety Guidelines for Fall 2021 Ministry with Children, Youth and Families in Communities of Faith (August 2021)

The recommendations and orders from the Provincial Health Officers are continuously changing as the COVID-19 situation is dynamic. There are resources available to support decisions you make to ensure the safety and well-being of your community. They include:

- **BCCA Covid-19 Health & Safety Guidelines** – Day Camps
 - Day Camps <http://bccamping.org/resources/Documents/BCCA%20COVID-19%20Day%20Camp%20Guideline%20June%2011.2021.docx.pdf>
 - BC Centre for Disease Control: COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools
- **CoVid-19 Information for Albertans** –
 - General Information <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/topics/Page16944.aspx>
 - Events during COVID <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/topics/Page17250.aspx>
 - Guide for Parents - <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/topics/Page16998.aspx>

Infection Prevention and Exposure Control Measures

Manage the risk of COVID-19 with multiple layers of protection. The first step is to ensure those who are sick are not entering the event. Be outdoors as much as possible, practicing physical distancing, using masks when inside and are unable to physically distance, prioritizing hand hygiene, and cleaning and disinfecting high-touch surfaces. All layers are important because no layer is perfect.

- Physical distancing is an important layer because COVID-19 spreads through close contact. This can be done by conducting activities outdoors, adapting group activities to minimize physical contact, establishing occupancy limits for indoor spaces, and staggering meeting times and mealtimes.
- Wearing masks provides another layer of protection. Check with your provincial health officers to see what the mask mandate is for your area. Encourage everyone to wear masks indoors, (and are in close proximity) as they are able.
- Other layers include effective cleaning and hygiene practices such as handwashing, cough hygiene, and the cleaning and disinfecting of high touch surfaces and objects.

Public Health Measures:

Restricted gathering size:

- Check with your provincial health officers to see what the maximum gathering size is for your area. Ensure that this information is posted.

Finding, Tracing, and Managing Outbreaks

- To assist in contact tracing should the need arise, take attendance of all people gathered to participate at your event.
- Keep concise daily records of all people who enter the designated spaces as well as incidents that happen at the event to help aid public health staff accomplish their job.
- The following are examples of incidents that should be recorded by program staff: A child, staff or volunteer shows symptoms of illness at event, first aid emergencies that required contact between 2 or more individuals, incidences where contact between 2 or more people was not avoided, if COVID-19 guidelines were not followed, etc.

Requiring Self-Isolation and Quarantine:

- Parents/Guardians are required when registering their child to consent to not sending their child to the event if they have any cold/flu symptoms or symptoms of COVID-19.
- Parents are encouraged when registering to not send their child to the event if they cannot follow the COVID-19 guidelines (Please refer to Appendix A).
- Staff and volunteers will also be required to stay home and be tested for COVID-19 if they have any cold/flu symptoms or symptoms of COVID-19.
- Self-Isolation is advised for any staff, volunteers and participants who are considered to be in close contact with confirmed cases of COVID-19.

Environmental Measures:

To limit risk and exposure, follow these environmental protocols:

Cleaning & Disinfecting:

- Staff will be trained and required to disinfect bathrooms and high contact areas (e.g., shared equipment, doorknobs, light switches, tabletops) a minimum of twice a day. Staff will clean the bathrooms and high contact areas at minimum after a three-hour period during an event.
- Staff will use commonly used disinfectants and follow the label instructions for proper use (e.g., length of time disinfectant needs to remain wet on the surface for a specified amount of time).
- Staff will be given all the necessary supplies to clean including disposable gloves and paper towels.
- Staff will follow proper hand hygiene before and after cleaning and will be encouraged to use gloves while cleaning.
- Staff will be trained in proper hand hygiene and cleaning.
- Increased attention to hygiene (e.g., handwashing) will be given before and after using equipment or surfaces that cannot be easily disinfected (e.g. when at the playground, craft supplies, frisbee, bubble wands, etc).
- Participants will receive a basic supply kit for the event that they will use in order to prevent sharing of supplies (e.g., markers, glue, scissors).

- Staff will provide regular access to hand sanitizer and hand washing stations to participants and themselves throughout the day with particular emphasis on certain parts of the day (e.g., When participants arrive, before snack time, after using the washrooms, before lunch, before and after using playground/shared equipment public bathrooms at parks, if a child coughs or sneezes into hands, and when leaving for the day etc.).

Outdoor Spaces and Ventilation:

- Consider programs that can take place outside, as much as possible.
- Use tents as shelter space outdoors.

Physical Markers and Barriers

- Staff may use pylons, marker cones, plastic sitting mats, chalk and/or tape to encourage physical distancing and to give guidance to participants in settings where they must wait their turns (e.g., parent/caregiver drop off locations, bathrooms, hand sanitizing stations, playground equipment, etc.).
- Post handwashing posters in bathrooms and kitchens.

Inside Space

- If a program or activity occurs indoors, staff will ensure the space is ventilated as much as possible (e.g., keep windows and doors open).

Administrative Measures:

Physical Distancing & Minimizing Physical Contact & Groups

- Organize participants into groups of (10) or less with up to three additional leaders. Assigned to the group for the duration of your event, as much as is practicable and feasible.
- The number of staff, and volunteers interacting with each group of children should be minimized; staff should be dedicated to a single group and not move between groups if possible. If “floater staff” or different staff need to rotate between groups, they should be sure to sanitize their hands prior to entering the groups’ space and staff should wear a face covering (e.g., mask).
- Adolescents should physically distance themselves where possible. For younger children, maintaining physical distance is less practical and the focus should be on minimizing physical contact instead (e.g., no high fives, handshakes, hugs, etc.).
- Non-essential visitors’ and volunteers’ proximity to groups should be restricted.
- Group space is set up to allow for 2 metres of physical distance between people.
- If a participant requires a support worker or other additional personal assistance, this person(s) must be included in the cohort count and that individual must follow all health guidelines.
- Multiple groups can use shared indoor spaces (e.g., arts and crafts, recreation hall) if physical distancing can be maintained between groups. If physical distancing is not possible, activities should

be staggered so these groups do not come into contact with one another. No more than 6 people should share a table.

- Programming will minimize the use of common washrooms by more than one group at a given time. If this is not possible, physical distancing and mask wearing is required.
- Personal items brought to the event should be limited to those items that are necessary (i.e., backpacks, water bottles, reusable food containers, change of clothes).

Pick up & Drop off

- Set up cones or tape markers 2 metres apart to help maintain physical distancing in order for families to safely drop off/ pick up and sign in/sign out participants.
- Ask parents/caregivers daily to confirm that their child does not have cold/flu symptoms or COVID-19 symptoms.
- Parents are asked to sanitize their hands before using the sign in or sign out sheet. They will also be encouraged to use their own pens.
- Parents will be asked to not go beyond the drop off/pick up location as feasible.

Program & Activities

- When deciding event structure and activities, choose and modify activities that allow for physical distancing.
- Shared equipment will be disinfected before and after it is used (e.g., bubble wands, frisbees etc.).
- For equipment or surfaces that cannot be easily disinfected (e.g., playground equipment, yarn, craft supplies etc.) increased handwashing and use of hand sanitizer will be required.
- Craft supplies will be distributed by the staff to groups as opposed to craft stations being set up for the whole event.

Education

- Staff will use creativity to make COVID-19 education as fun, engaging, and supportive as possible (e.g., skits, handwashing rhymes, etc.).
- Continual reminders for younger folks will be necessary and emphasis should be on developmentally appropriate, playful, and supportive ways to communicate all procedures (e.g., each group could come up with a fun word they use to playfully remind others to practice physical distancing).

Food Service

Participants should be encouraged to bring their own food for snacks and/or meals. If this is not possible, please ensure the following:

- Contract with individuals who are FoodSafe Certified and adhere to WorkSafe protocols. They will prepare food either onsite or in other appropriate kitchens and deliver **individual** snacks and lunches.
- Snacks provided to participants and staff will be packaged and store bought or provided from our contracted individuals.
- Fruit provided will be washed, served whole, and not shared.

- Participants will eat in their assigned groups.

First Aid

- Both the first aid attendant and the person receiving treatment should wear masks while care is being provided.
- A mask and gloves should be worn for all first aid applications.
- If CPR is required, use a pocket mask with a viral filter, or a bag-valve-mask with an HME filter to protect the first aider from possible infection.

Transportation

- Group transportation is not recommended and should be utilized for unavoidable transport only, not recreational travel.

Staff Training

- Staff will receive training on all COVID-19 related policies and procedures.

Personal Measures

Personal measures can be taken by the individual for the safety of themselves and others they interact with.

Daily Participants and Staff Screening and Staying Home

- All parents, caregivers, children, and staff who have symptoms of COVID-19 OR travelled outside Canada in the last 14 days OR were identified by Public Health as a close contact of a confirmed case must stay home and self-isolate.
- Anyone with cold/flu or COVID-19 symptoms or other illness must stay home
- Parents/guardians must check their children each day for symptoms. Staff should ask parents/guardians to confirm this at drop off.
- Staff must check themselves each day for symptoms and stay home if they are unwell.

Hand Hygiene

- Wash hands with soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds.
- Alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol may be used if sinks are not available.
- If hands are visibly soiled, alcohol-based hand sanitizers may not be effective at eliminating respiratory viruses. Soap and water are preferred when hands are visibly dirty.
- Include regular hand washing times in daily schedules.
- Ensure the event is well-stocked with hand washing supplies at all times, including plain soap, clean towels, paper towels, waste bins, and where appropriate, hand sanitizer with a minimum of 60% alcohol.
- Children regularly forget about proper hand washing. Staff and participants should practice handwashing often and staff should model washing hands properly in a fun and relaxed way.
- Staff should assist young people with hand hygiene as needed.

Respiratory Etiquette

- Cough and sneeze into your elbow.
- Remind participants and staff to avoid touching their face.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Staff will have access to hand sanitizer, gloves to use if needing to administer first aid, and masks to wear if physical distancing is not possible.
- Staff will wear chemical resistant disposable gloves when cleaning. Staff will wash their hands before and after using gloves.

Appendix A - COVID19 Safety Acknowledgement Sample

At _____ we understand and value how children have different needs of care and support. We strive to honor and value each child's unique needs. We are all living through a traumatic event. At this event we will be making a concerted effort to create a calm, non anxious place for both staff and participants. Where we are able, we will support children in the Covid Safety Procedures in a playful and positive way. As part of this effort, we ask that you please consider each of the questions below regarding your child's ability to successfully participate in this event. Please sign your initials next to each question to show your consideration and agreement.

_____ Our staff will be unable to offer any acts of support such as holding hands, hugs, or high fives. Do you think your child will be able to successfully participate without physical support and affirmation?

Parent/Guardian Initials

_____ Will they be able to maintain a physical boundary between staff and other people?

Parent/Guardian Initials

_____ Will they be comfortable with new ways of showing affirmation and care (in line with physical distancing protocols)?

Parent/Guardian Initials

This year our event will be taking place outside. Due to limited leaders and social distancing protocol, we need you to discern if your child will be able to successfully follow their leader's direction to ensure their safety, the safety of other participants and the safety of staff. We are not asking for your child(ren) to be perfect; we are asking if, with gentle reminders and encouragement, they are able to do the following.

_____ My child is able to follow the directions from others.

Parent/Guardian Initials

_____ My child will stay with the group.

Parent/Guardian Initials

_____ My child can manage their toileting needs.

Parent/Guardian Initials

_____ My child will cooperate with the need for more intentional hand washing.

Parent/Guardian Initials

We have a zero-tolerance policy for accommodating any participants showing symptoms that include: fever, chills, new or worsening cough, shortness of breath, sore throat and new muscle aches or headache.

_____ I understand that if my child begins to show symptoms they will be separated from the staff and other participants.

Parent/Guardian Initials

_____ If my child begins to feel unwell at the event, I will be available to pick them up immediately.

Parent/Guardian Initials

_____ If I am unable to pick them up their emergency contact will be able to pick them up.

Parent/Guardian Initials

_____ If we travel outside of Canada and return less than 14 days prior to the event we will not attend.

Parent/Guardian Initials